CONSUMER TIME R- 223

FEDERAL MEAT INSPECTION

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL

2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME.

3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER.

4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes, the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available as a public service for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the War Food Administration.

And here are Mrs. Freyman and Johnny.

5. JOHN: Today...we're going to tell about how meat is inspected by the United States Government.

6. FREYMAN: Yes, we're going to tell the story behind the little round purple stamp you find on your meat...the stamp that says " U. S. Inspected and Passed."

7. JOHN: You know I never realized just what a thorough, painstaking, all-day and all-night job meat inspection is. Did you ever see those fellows at work, Mrs. Freyman?

8. FREYMAN: Well...no, Johnny, not actually. I know they're busy.

9. JOHN: Busy. That's not the word for it. When we buy a piece of meat we glance at that little purple stamp that says Inspected and Passed...and probably think somebody, well...gave it the once-over ...stamped down the seal and shouted, "O.K., next." But believe me, Mrs. Freyman...the story of what goes on behind that stamp of approval is almost unbelievable.

10. FREYMAN: Well, you've got my curiosity aroused, Johnny. What is the story'

11. JOHN: This is how I happened to come across it. You know a couple of weeks ago when we told our CONSUMER TIME listeners how meat was transported across the country? And then...we got to thinking we'd follow it up by telling how meat was Government inspected?

12. FREYMAN: Yes, Johnny...

13. JOHN: Well...I dropped over to see a Federal meat inspector...in one of the country's big meat-packing plants. I thought...you know... I'd talk the thing over for a few minutes, take some notes... maybe take a quick look while he put the stamps on the meat. But...oh no.

14. FREYMAN: (LAUGH) What on earth happened?

15. JOHN: He said...."Well, you asked for it, Johnny",...and tossed me a big white coat. "Put it on," he said " and come on outside with me." Well, Mrs. Freyman, it took me all day to go through that packing house. All day...and I could have stayed a week. If there's one person who really has respect for that purple inspection stamp...it is yours truly.

16. FREYMAN: Well...I'm all ears, Johnny. What did you do first?

17. JOHN: First, we went out into the stockyards...where cattle and pigs and sheep were milling around. Now first off, mind you, the inspector has to look these animals over carefully, while they're on the hoof, as they say. That's his first step. He explained to me as we went along...(FADE)

18. SOUND: CATTLE

19. INSPECTOR: See here...first I examine the animals while they're resting... watch how they breathe...look at their size...just generally catch them unawares, so to speak. Then...(SHOUTING) come on. Get up there. Get moving there fella.

20. SOUND: CATTLE NOISE UP...TROTTING ETC.

21. JOHN: Hey wait a minute. Let me get over this fence. Hey...just a second...(ETC....EXCITED)

22. INSPECTOR: (LAUGH) They won't hurt you. (PROJECTING) See...now I watch them on the run. I can tell if any of 'em lag behind...sort of act dopey, you know. Like...(GRUNT) like this big baby over here...HEEEEP...stop it now!

23. INSPECTOR: See here, Johnny...this one doesn't look any too well and healthy We might find something wrong with him. So...see this?

24. JOHN: Looks like a tag.

25. INSPECTOR: Read it.

26. JOHN: Let's see..."U.S. Suspect." A suspect?

27. INSPECTOR: That means we're not sure what his condition is. We've got to give him a pretty thorough examination. He may be o.k....but we'll keep an eye on him. (FADE)

28. JOHN: Well...that was the first step of inspection. Looking over the stock out in the yards...only the beginning.

29. FREYMAN: Did he find many suspects...Johnny?

30. JOHN: Oh no...not many at all. Every now and then, though, an animal would be pretty bad off...he could tell that by looking...and that one would be condemned...and wouldn't be used for meat. But he told me that livestock now is very much healthier than it used to be. For instance there used to be a lot of TB in cattle. An awful lot. Well, about 25 years ago, the Department of Agriculture set out to eliminate it by having every single cow and bull and steer in the United States tested for it. Now, it's practically eliminated.

31. FREYMAN: Why, Johnny...that's wonderful.

32. JOHN: Sure it is. And they found out, too...that because of this...the hogs were a lot healthier too. Because they couldn't catch anything from healthy cattle.

[illegible]

33. FREYMAN: Now Johnny...there's one thing we really want to make clear today...and that is that not all meat in the country is Federally Inspected.

34. JOHN: Oh no indeed. Only the meat that goes in interstate commerce has to be Federally Inspected by law...and also the meat the Government buys....and the meat that goes overseas. A lot of other meat is Government inspected, though. Altogether, it amounts to about two-thirds of all the meat in the country.

35. FREYMAN: So it really pays to look for that little seal "U. S. Inspected and Passed."

36. JOHN: You bet it does. And we'll understand that better, as we go on with the story. Now...next thing the inspectors do...is examine the meat. Not just look at it...but believe me, they inspect and scrutinize every single part of it. Nothing escapes these boys. And mind you they have to inspect hundreds upon hundreds of animals every day. Then too, a piece of meat has to be looked at by four different inspectors before it's finally approved.

37. FREYMAN: Goodness, Johnny...I certainly didn't know that!

38. JOHN: I didn't either. Now take pork for instance. There's an assembly line that moves along at a pretty fast clip. And in the place where I was, four inspectors were working...right while the line was moving. Believe me, they didn't miss a thing. They looked at the hams and shoulders and chops...the liver and kidneys and heart...everything. Finally, at the end of the line, when the meat was approved, a girl stood there and stamped every market cut of meat with the familiar purple stamp.

39. FREYMAN: Which incidentally, Johnny...is perfectly harmless to eat, isn't it. Many people think not.

40. JOHN: It is absolutely harmless, that's true, Mrs. Freyman. Well, it certainly was the most satisfying feeling to see the meat that was o.k'd and passed by those thorough inspectors. It was clean, healthful meat all the way through. It had to be. You see, a certain number of these inspectors have to be veterinarians... have to hold a degree of " Doctor of Veterninary Medicine", from a recognized college. That's another thing I found out. And...everybody calls the inspectors "Doc". They were calling me "Doc" too, in my white coat...but I was anything but that. I was wide-eyed amazement.

41. FREYMAN: Well now Johnny what happened when they came across a piece of meat they thought shouldn't be sold for eating purposes?

42. JOHN: Ah...there's another story. Now these inspectors are so particular about what happens to the meat they don't pass on, you'd be amazed. Every single piece of meat that's "condemned", they call it...is numbered and tagged, and a record is made of it. Then it's sent immediately to an entirely separate building...and put in a big tank and sealed up tighter'n a drum.

43. FREYMAN: Why is it sealed, Johnny?

44. JOHN: Simply so there won't be the slightest chance for any of it ever to get in with the meat that goes for human consumption. The Government inspector is the only one who can break the seal... and a careful count is kept of every piece of condemned meat. Even the windows of this building are covered with heavy wire, so no one can get in there. They're proud of the way they protect that condemned meat.

45. FREYMAN: What do they do with it, finally, Johnny...

46. JOHN: Well...they use every bit of it, actually. Make some of it into fertilizer...and among other things use, the fat for inedible grease.

47. FREYMAN: Oh...Johnny. This fat must be used just the way the grease we save for the fat salvage campaign is used. For explosives, medicines and other things.

48. JOHN: It sure is, Mrs. Freyman.

49. FREYMAN: Which reminds me that this fat salvage campaign is just as important as ever right now. But Johnny...let's go on with our story. Now there was something I was going to ask you back there. Oh yes. About pork. When they're inspecting that, do they ever find trichinae?

50. JOHN: No they don't. Even though these parasites may actually be there in the pork. That was something I asked my inspector friend. He told me...(FADE)

51. INSPECTOR: You see, Johnny...there is no practical way for an Inspector to find trichinae. It's very hard to detect. That's why, if I were you, I'd remind your listeners that it's very important to cook pork meat thoroughly. Pork chops, pork sausages, spareribs, ham, etc...must be heated to at least 137 degrees...and all the way through...if trichinae is to be destroyed.

52. JOHN: Does that apply to frankfuters and bologna too?

53. INSPECTOR: Well...no. Franks and smoked and dried sausages which are Government inspected are always heated in the process of making...so the there's no danger of trichinosis there. But it's a good idea to remember...to cook all fresh pork thoroughly! (FADE)

54. JOHN: And that's what he told me.

55. FREYMAN: Well, we'll remember that.

56. JOHN: So...to go on with the inspection story. It's the same with beef or lamb...every last piece of meat is carefully inspected for many different things before it can be stamped. And clean? My goodness, Mrs. Freyman...you never saw such finicky people as these inspectors. We'd be walking along...everything'd look spotless and fine to me, when all of a sudden my friend the Doc would stop and call out.

57. INSPECTOR: Hey, Joe. Look at that pipe up there on the ceiling. It's dripping. Get that fixed. I don't want stuff dripping on any meat around here.

58. JOHN: (LOW NARRATION) Or he'd stop by a table, where some girls were making long strings of sausages. He's stop and point to a...well perfectly harmless looking lassie I thought...and say...

59. INSPECTOR: What'd I tell you about wearing fingernail polish in here.

60. JOHN: Then we'd go on...and he'd pick up a tool here, a piece of machinery there...tiny utensils...and inspect them carefully. If they weren't spotless, somebody'd really catch it.

61. FREYMAN: That's part of their job too, then...to see that everything's clean?

62. JOHN: That's what they consider next most important to seeing that the meat is healthful and good. Cleanliness. Do you know that every morning inspectors have to go around the plant...look at all the floors and walls and equipment...and if something isn't shining bright...they put a tag on it saying "U. S. Rejected". And no work can be done in that room until it's cleaned up. "U.S. Rejected". How do you like that!

63. FREYMAN: Whew...they are careful, aren't they?

64. JOHN: And in the big room where people are trimming bacon and cutting up chops and steaks...would you believe it...if one chop falls on the floor...it's immediately marked "U.S. Condemned" and sent right over to that big separate building I told you about.

[illegible] Gorsky: [illegible] the inspection story. [illegible]
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[illegible] Bowman [illegible]
[illegible] Inspectors. [illegible]
[illegible] time to [illegible] of a [illegible]
[illegible] drop and roll out.

[illegible]: [illegible] Look [illegible] on the [illegible]
[illegible] Yes. I don't want about [illegible]
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personal [illegible]

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65. FREYMAN: Why, Johnny, that doesn't seem possible.

66. JOHN: (LAUGH) Sure. They've got eyes like hawks, those inspectors.

67. FREYMAN: Their job never ends, I guess...

68. JOHN: Doesn't stop until the meat's ready to leave the packing house all wrapped and stamped and on the way. They're even responsible for the labels, on boxed and canned meat.

69. FREYMAN: How do you mean?

70. JOHN: Well...it's a law that a label can't describe the meat as "the world's finest"...or "the best sausages you ever tasted". No sir...if you notice...all labels on meat are very modest. They simply tell what it is...how much it weighs...what's in it...and the U. S. Inspected seal is on it. And to see that the label conforms with the regulations...is also part of the Inspector's job.

71. FREYMAN: Goodness, Johnny...What else do they do?

72. JOHN: Well, they've got another responsibility...they've got to check on the quality and quantity of the ingredients that go into meat products, like sausage meat for instance. Sausages. That reminds me.

73. FREYMAN: What, Johnny?

74. JOHN: My favorite part of the packing house...was the big room where they smoked sausages. We went over to the man who was tending the smokers...(FADE)

75. INSPECTOR: Hey, Mack...open up the door in there. Man here wants to see sausages being smoked.

76. JOHN: The big door swung open...and there they were...hundreds of sausages hanging on racks...all crispy brown. And the hot, sweet-smelling woodsmoke swirled around us....mmmm boy...that was inviting. Then the Inspector said...

77. INSPECTOR: You want to try something really good?

78. JOHN: What's that?

79. INSPECTOR: A hot dog right out of the smoke. Just a minute....(GRUNT OF STRETCHING)...there. Here you are...just take a bit of that.

80. JOHN: And he handed me a hot hot dog...and he was right. It was the most delicious thing I ever tasted. Well, we stood around there, munching these sausages...I was fascinated watching a man stir two giant vats full of scrapple. And with the smell of woodsmoke ...the big racks of steaming hot dogs being wheeled by...boy... I thought I was dreaming.

81. FREYMAN: (LAUGH) You must have had a wonderful time, Johnny.

82. JOHN: And then there were hams. We went up to the big ham smoker...and the man opened the door for us. "How many hams do you suppose are in there", my inspector friend asked the attendant. "Oh, about twenty-two hundred", the attendant said calmly. Twenty-two hundred hams...in one smoker.

83. FREYMAN: What a sight that must have been. And I suppose the Doc had to inspect hams and cured meat too...as well as fresh?

84. JOHN: Sure...the processed meats...salted pork, corned beef...canned meats. You know they're canning a lot of meat for the Army, too. Well, they all have to be "U.S. Inspected and Passed by the Department of Agriculture.

85. FREYMAN: Well, Johnny..frankly I had no idea all this went on. How wonderful that our inspected meat is so very carefully gone over...and that working conditions are so absolutely immaculate. I'll always look for that purple stamp now.

86. JOHN: Well, it's really important, Mrs. Freyman. Now I found out one more interesting thing. It's about meat grading. That's really a complete story in itself.

87. FREYMAN: Many people think that grading and inspection are the same thing.

88. JOHN: No...they've very different. The Federal meat grader has to mark for quality. His job is to decide whether a piece of meat falls into one of four quality grades. Do you know the four grades, Mrs. Freyman?

89. FREYMAN: Yes...I believe they're "Choice", "Good", "Commercial", and "Utility".

90. JOHN: Right. And it's important to remember that on the OPA chart, Double A refers to Choice; A is good; B is commercial, and C is utility. So you can buy your meat either by use of the letter grade or the grade name.

91. FREYMAN: I'll remember that Johnny.

92. JOHN: The grader's job is very important. Now that meat rationing is in effect...all the meat in the entire country has to be graded ...because, as you very well know, the grades on the meat determine how many of those precious ration points you have to pay.

93. FREYMAN: So...the Grader's job is to judge the actual quality of the meat ...how much fat it has, how tender or tough it is.

94. JOHN: Yes. And I think we might as well tell a little bit about what these grades mean. In beef, for instance...meat marked "U.S. Choice", is very high quality, threaded with fat...and ideal for steaks and roasts.

95. FREYMAN: "U.S. Good", means that the meat is good quality for all uses... a little fat is mixed in with the lean.

96. JOHN: The next one is "U.S. Commercial"...that's very satisfactory for potroasts...etc., and although third in line, it's really quite good quality.

97. FREYMAN: Now the grade that people do a lot of talking about...is the fourth one..."U.S. Utility". It is a low-priced beef...for which no ration points are needed. So look extra carefully for the Utility Grade stamp on the meat. The beef is just as nourishing...and just as delciious when it's prepared right, as the higher grades. And it's fine for potroast, stew, and other inexpensive dishes.

98. JOHN: Well...to sum it up...this grading system does assure the homemaker of uniform quality in the meat she buys.

99. FREYMAN: Whereas the Federal meat Inspector assures her that the meat's healthful...and was prepared under absolutely sanitary conditions.

100. JOHN: Yes...and as we said before...it's mighty important to look carefully for the inspection seal...because it's a symbol of absolute wholesomeness and purity. And your butcher is always proud to show it.

101. FREYMAN: Now, Johnny...we ought to say just a word about how Federal inspection was started.

102. JOHN: Oh yes...back in 1800...over a century ago...the first Federal meat inspection law was passed. It enabled the meat industry to expand its markets...here and overseas. Then there was so much public enthusiasm over it, that the law was improved and amended, so that today, our Federal meat service is recognized as the finest in the world.

103. FREYMAN: And that, CONSUMER TIME friends, is the story of what's behind the little round seal, "U.S. Inspected and Passed by the Department of Agriculture".

104. JOHN: Now Mrs. Freyman, I think a good many of our listeners would be interested in a little more practical information about how to choose beef by grade. Once you find the inspection stamp... next thing to look for is the quality stamp. And we have a little booklet that tells how to buy beef by grade.

105. FREYMAN: Want to tell about it, Holly Wright?

106. WRIGHT: Friends, you'll find the booklet "Buying Beef by Grade", of real value to you in your marketing. It's yours free when you write CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C. It describes the grades of beef in detail, and is illustrated with photographs. Even though beef is not always plentiful in all localities, we're sure you'll find this booklet informative and helpful to you when you're making your selection. Send for the booklet "Buying Beef by Grade". It's yours free, Be sure to include your name, address and the name of the station to which you are listening. Write to...CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C.

107. FREYMAN: Thank you, Holly. Now next week, Johnny...guess what?

108. JOHN: What, Mrs. Freyman?

109. FREYMAN: We're turning over a new leaf.

110. JOHN: How's that.

111. FREYMAN: Well, the year 1944 is drawing to a close and we're going to start a budget. Start the New Year off with a brand new budget.

112. JOHN: (GROAN) Oh...Mrs. Freyman...

113. FREYMAN: (STERNLY) Johnny. Budgeting can be a lot of fun. Especially when the whole family pitches in...even the kiddies. We're going to tell a lot of practical hints about budgeting...and we're going to have plenty of fun doing it.

114. JOHN: According to Mrs. Freyman, friends...we must all listen in next week...to the budget edition of...

115. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...MONEY IN TILL

116. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

117. SOUND: CASH REGISTER

118. JOHN: How your money buys a living in wartime.

119. SOUND: CASH REGISTER....CLOSE DRAWER.

[illegible] Want to tell about it, Molly [illegible]?

[illegible] STAFF: Friends, you'll find the booklet "Hygiene Beef by Grade", of real value to you in your marketing. It's yours free when you write [illegible] Stock Yards, Washington 25, D. C. It describes the [illegible] beef in detail, and is illustrated with photographs. Now there's [illegible] to be always plenty in all localities, we're sure [illegible] that this booklet information can help [illegible] making your selection. Just [illegible] "Hygiene [illegible] Grade". This ought [illegible] to include your name, and [illegible] and the name of the station so that you are listening. Write [illegible] Stock Yards, Washington 25, D. C.

[illegible] Thank you, Molly. [illegible]

[illegible]: [illegible] Yes, [illegible]

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